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1) SECNAV Signals Sweeping Changes To Promotion, GMT & PFA/ 13 MAY 15

NAVY TIMES, Meghann Myers

ANNAPOLIS, Md. - Huge changes are coming to the way sailors and officers pursue their careers, meet fitness standards and conduct their daily lives.

Navy Secretary Ray Mabus announced a host of radical changes during a speech to midshipmen here Wednesday, including the way sailors are advanced and promoted, ending general military training, expanding career flexibility, easing body fat standards, and offering sure-to-be-popular moves like 24-hour gyms and expanded child-care hours.

First up: The end of general military training via Navy Knowledge Online, starting June 1.

"Command triads will determine if and when training is needed," Mabus said. "And to make relevant training more accessible and efficient, I've asked the chief of naval personnel and the Office of Naval Research to develop mobile applications for fleet release in fiscal year 2016."

That doesn't include legally mandated training, like sexual assault prevention, that commands do in-person, but it does get rid of the check-the-block online modules sailors detest.

"You may hear sea-stories of mundane, arduous, and seemingly pointless GMT, but you won't experience it," Mabus told the thousands of midshipmen.

And after years of complaints from sailors, the Navy will "completely revamp" the body composition assessment, starting with the tape test.

"Our pass fail/system that only - and sometimes inaccurately - assesses one aspect of physical fitness is going to end," he said.

The service is looking at the Air Force model, which tapes only the waist instead of the waist and neck. And on top of that, Mabus said, a BCA failure will no longer mean an overall physical fitness assessment failure, because sailors will still be able to take their physical readiness tests.

"In the Navy alone, last year, we separated 1,500 people - 1,500 sailors for failing the PFA," he said. "That wastes everybody's time and resources. That's more than we separated for drug use, for example."

New PT Standards

To enforce a year-round culture of fitness, commanding officers will also be able to do random spot checks in between PFA tests. These won't be punitive, but if sailors fail BCA or PRT between tests, their commands can work with them to get them back in shape.

And for those who surpass standards, there will be a fitness patch to be worn on the outside of the new Navy PT suit, which comes out next year. Those who max out their PRT three cycles in a row, Mabus added, will be eligible for a new Outstanding Fitness Award.

Leadership has not yet decided whether it will be a ribbon or medal, but it will be worn on dress uniforms, a senior Navy official confirmed to Navy Times on Tuesday.

The discussion of physical standards continued after the speech, when midshipmen approached microphones to ask Mabus questions.

One mid asked whether the Navy Department's planned opening of remaining billets still closed to women - including Marine and Navy special warfare, and Marine infantry - would mean that physical standards will be lowered to accommodate them.

"My notion is, you set up gender-neutral standards. If you pass, you pass," Mabus replied. "Eighty percent of men can't pass [SEAL training]. Keep the standards. Do not lower standards in any regard."

Expanding Opportunities

Of the long list of initiatives Mabus is pushing, many deal with career and professional management.

The plan is to do away with year-groups for officers, the hard and fast system by which officers are pushed from tour to tour and ranked against each other. The new system will focus more on milestones, which would allow officers not ready for promotion to spend a few more years at their ranks, and fast track promotions for those who are ready.

Similarly, Mabus signaled a huge change for enlisted advancements. The Command Advancement Program, where commanding officers can spot promote their best sailors, will be retooled into the Meritorious Advancement Program and greatly expanded, including to sailors on shore duty, a long-standing request for many sailors.

On the flip side, Mabus said, COs will also have more leeway to separate sailors whom they feel aren't making the cut.

"You'll have more control over who you advance or who you separate without being subjected to a really cumbersome separation process," he said.

And for those looking to round out their resumes, the Navy is expanding the Career Intermission Program tenfold - from 40 to 400 billets - in which sailors will be able to take up to three years off. It is also opening up graduate education and industry internship options for officers.

There are plans to add 30 more spots for in-residence graduate education this year. And starting this fall, Mabus said, the Navy will send its best qualified officers for internships at Fortune 500 companies.

"When these officers return to the fleet, they'll bring industry's best practices with them," he said.

With the economy improving, the Navy is looking at ways to retain its best talent, particularly where women are concerned, because they leave the service at twice the rate of men.

Many women say they don't feel the Navy is conducive to raising a family, a senior Navy official told Navy Times on Tuesday, and so they get out.

To ease the burden, the Navy also plans to double maternity leave from six weeks to 12 weeks for new mothers and expand on-base child-care hours for parents.

Additionally, an updated co-location policy will allow dual military couples to be assigned to the same area while taking into account key billets that will equally benefit their careers.

Roll-out for these initiatives will take place as early as this year, spreading into 2017 for year-group changes and 2017 for new fitness policies.

<http://www.navytimes.com/story/military/2015/05/13/navy-secretary-ray-mabus-naval-academy-changes/27234685/>

2.) Nomination for Next Chief of Naval Operations Announced/ 13 MAY 15 [\[LINK\]](#)

Chief of Naval Operations Public Affairs, Chief Mass Communication Specialist Julianne Metzger

WASHINGTON (NNS) -- Defense Secretary Ashton Carter announced today during a Pentagon press briefing that he has recommended Adm. John M. Richardson as the next Chief of Naval Operations (CNO). A career submarine officer, Richardson is currently director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program. If confirmed, Richardson will replace Adm. Jonathan W. Greenert who has been CNO since September 2011. Greenert will retire this fall after 40 years of naval service.

"John Richardson is one of our finest officers and I have great confidence that he is the right leader for our Navy," said Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus.

Greenert also praised Richardson if confirmed, "Admiral John Richardson is an ideal strategic leader to keep our Navy moving forward," he said.

"He cares about our Sailors, has the background and experience in dealing with tough challenges combined with expert judgment that will guide our Navy well," Greenert continued. "He has played a fundamental role in addressing many of our current and future challenges. I am confident he will ensure our Navy's seapower, now and in the future."

Richardson, 55, hails from Petersburg, Virginia. He graduated with a degree in Physics from the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, Md. in 1982. Richardson also holds Masters Degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, and the National War College.

As one of the Navy's top leaders, Richardson has a broad-based record as an operational commander. Richardson commanded the nuclear attack submarine USS Honolulu (SSN 718), served as a naval aide to the President of the United States, as well as numerous other assignments through his career. Richardson received the prestigious Vice Adm. James Stockdale for inspirational leadership award in 2001, among a long list of personal and unit awards.

Mabus also praised Greenert, the man who has been at the helm of the Navy for the past four years as the current CNO.

"Jon Greenert should be incredibly proud of the accomplishments of the U.S. Navy under his leadership," said Mabus. "Our Navy is better able to respond to the myriad of challenges around the world because of his stewardship in deploying the greatest fighting fleet the world has ever known."

For biography on Adm. Richardson visit www.navy.mil/navydata/bios/navybio.asp?bioID=440.

3.) A Focus on Dignity and Respect/ 14 MAY 15 [\[LINK\]](#)

Director, 21st Century Sailor Office, Rear Adm. Rick Snyder

Some important news from the 21st Century Sailor Office - we published the Navy's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Strategic Plan. It's worth a read by everyone to better understand the way ahead in Navy's efforts to prevent and respond to sexual assault.

The strategic plan incorporates the progress we've made and the lessons we've learned. This plan formalizes and supports the unity of effort taking place across the Navy to address the crime of sexual assault.

Many of the elements of the plan are familiar; the spectrum of harm that describes the range of destructive behaviors, commitment from leaders to create the conditions that support equality, dignity and respect, and the bedrock principles of prevention, response, and appropriate accountability.

The plan also incorporates new information we've gained, highlighting the need to better understand the aspects of male victims of sexual assaults and the need to better understand and respond to the negative experiences of those who report a sexual assault.

The SAPR Strategic Plan is a living document that will be updated as we learn and adapt our prevention and response efforts using additional surveys, information from focus groups, and feedback from the fleet and other Services.

Your input helped us write this plan and is critical as we move forward. Thank you for your help and continued support of Navy's efforts to eliminate sexual assault - know your part, do your part.

Find the strategic plan below and here at: www.sapr.navy.mil
For more info about the 21st Century Sailor Office visit the office's page.

4.) How Did The Navy's Greys Become Great? The Power Of Career Intermissions / 14 MAY 15 [\[LINK\]](#) WAR ON THE ROCKS, B.J. Armstrong

On May 13th at the U.S. Naval Academy, Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus rolled out a slate of new initiatives to reform the naval personnel system and make it more responsive in the 21st century. Many of the ideas he discussed have been foreshadowed in the writing of junior officers, as well as seniors like Vice Admiral Bill Moran. If the Department of the Navy is able to follow through on these reforms, historians may look back on them as having importance like the Naval Personnel Act of 1916, which introduced promotion by selection, and the reforms of the All-Volunteer Force.

While there are a number of policies that can be changed internally, there are other programs that will require congressional action and reform of laws and statute. Specifically, the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act (DOPMA), which has governed the military's officer personnel system for three decades without change, will need to be updated and improved. The first place Congress should start is with the expansion and permanence of the Career Intermission Program.

Aside from the obvious benefit to service members looking to expand their horizons, career intermissions have the potential to improve the ability of our armed forces to effectively complete their missions. Though commonly cast as a modern creation, the Career Intermission Program actually has a historical foundation going all the way back to the earliest decades of the U.S. Navy. The use of career intermissions in the past has played a vital role in the professional development of many accomplished leaders including renowned naval figures like David Farragut, William Sims, and Chester Nimitz.

Study and Experience on the Barbary Coast In the fall of 1817, Midshipman David Farragut was serving aboard the Ship-of-the-Line Washington, which was the flagship of the Mediterranean Squadron. At 16 years old, he had already seen combat in the War of 1812 and his service to that point had been exemplary. When his friend and mentor Charles Folsom was appointed American consul in Tunis he applied to Commodore Isaac Chauncey to take Farragut with him for the winter, writing that he wanted to do "all in my power to promote his education." The winter months in the Mediterranean normally found American warships sequestered in port to avoid turbulent weather. Chauncey consented and gave permission for Farragut to leave the ship and join Folsom to "advance his knowledge" and "improve his character."

David Farragut traveled through southern Europe with his mentor, picking up language and cultural lessons in Marseilles and Malaga, before taking to the consul's house in Tunis. The young officer set to work at his studies, which were made up of mathematics, English literature, and French and Italian language courses. He mingled with the diplomatic corps in Tunis and made visits to the ruins of the ancient city of Carthage, experiencing the presence of history first-hand. He joined a number of expeditions into the interior of North Africa, learning about Muslim traditions, culture, and faith.

Ten months later, Farragut returned to the Mediterranean Squadron and resumed his duties. His broad experience and education immediately came to the attention of the captain of the new flagship Franklin, who made him his aide. Within a year he was promoted to acting-lieutenant and he leapt ahead of many of his peers in a career that would see him become the U.S. Navy's first admiral and the most accomplished naval combat leader of the Civil War.

Professionalism and a Parisian Cafe

In January of 1889, Lieutenant William Sims set sail for Paris, France. After nine years at sea as a junior officer, his progress toward promotion had been slower than he expected and he wanted to experience something new. After trying to learn some French from a shipmate during a deployment, he decided instead to apply to the Navy Department for a furlough, or a leave of absence, to go to France and study. As was relatively common in the

19th century, his request was granted, and he took off his uniform and headed across the Atlantic. Sims spent a year in Paris, where he studied French as well as European history and society. He learned from a pair of expatriate American artists about their bohemian lifestyle, and a French tutor helped him establish an academic routine for his studies. Sims became a regular attendee of the Paris theatre. He traveled throughout Europe with his new friends and instructors, picking up on culture and languages.

In 1890, he returned to the Navy and was ordered to the training ship Saratoga. Sims was a new man. He took all he had learned and experienced in Paris and put it into instructor duty. His outlook on the Navy and on his profession had been reinforced by his time away. When the opportunity to return to Paris as an attaché presented itself a few years later, Sims applied and was selected because of his new language skills. It was in this position that Lieutenant Sims began his career-long study of battleship design and gunnery, which would lead him to drive the Navy toward the techniques of continuous-aim fire and the all-big-gun battleship. Without his year in Paris, the admiral who led U.S. naval forces in World War I may never have achieved the prominence we know today.

Technology and Naval Learning

In May of 1913, Lieutenant Chester Nimitz and his recent bride Catherine headed for Hamburg, Germany. Chester had just completed orders in the nascent American submarine force, where the Navy was experimenting with the new technology of diesel engines. Because of his service as one of the older officers in submarines, the 28-year-old Nimitz was seen as a leading uniformed expert in the new propulsion field. For this reason, he was selected to take off his uniform and accompany two civilians to Germany to study the design and industrial production of large diesels used to drive entire ships.

The three Americans reported to the Blohm and Voss works, where they worked with the company's executives and observed operations. Nimitz organized trips throughout Germany to visit and study design and production facilities in Augsburg (where Rudolf Diesel completed his first commercially successful engine), Nuremberg, and Kiel. While his time in Europe was clearly dedicated to work, with many long days at the plants and learning

from German executives, the Nimitzes also found time for short trips together to see Germany, Denmark, and Sweden.

Nimitz returned to the United States and was ordered to the New York Navy Yard. He was given the task of leading the manufacture and installation of engines aboard the U.S. Navy's first diesel-powered ship. It was a ship, the oiler Maumee, which he would later command and use for the early development of underway replenishment for the Navy. As he supervised the construction, Nimitz was approached by American firms who had learned he was the Navy's leading diesel engine expert. The young officer was offered incredible sums to leave the service and assume an executive role in industry. At one point a company from St. Louis told him he could write his own ticket, offering him nearly a blank check. But Nimitz turned them all down. He knew the education and training he gained through his experience in Germany was important to the future of the Navy, and he believed the Navy would recognize it eventually. It was one of the many experiences that prepared him to command the Pacific Theater in World War II.

Career Intermission: Retrospect and Prospect Today, the idea of taking a break from service has been cast as a modern and creative solution to the talent management issues of the 20th century. However, the furlough or leave of absence actually has a long and important history in the Navy. Historian Christopher McKee has shown that it extends all the way back to the formative years of the service. His research demonstrated that in the first fifteen years of the Navy's existence "between one-fifth and one-quarter of the navy's officers were furloughed to gain career-related experience." And it wasn't just the Navy. In the 19th century, the Army also offered furloughs to officers who were in search of new experiences or knowledge.

Our modern discussion of career intermissions tends to focus on the talent management concepts of work-life-balance, personal agendas, or family considerations. This is unfortunate because throughout American military history career intermissions have been used to educate and develop officers in order to make them better at their profession. The examples provided by Farragut, Sims, and Nimitz show how some of our most accomplished combat leaders and strategic admirals benefited from their own career intermissions. But these examples also show how the Navy benefited by sending the young officers into the world to develop themselves, which resulted in more professional leadership, tactical innovation, and technological development for the service.

Career intermission programs are inexpensive for the military to run, but the benefits accrued from returning service members with greater experience, leadership ability, and knowledge should be seen as a great opportunity and potential force multiplier. There is always a chance that someone on an intermission might be tempted not to return. However, with the right administrative management and incentives in place the small amount of attrition that programs like these might generate is tolerable. And the future greats, like Nimitz, will stick around.

There are a growing number of voices calling for reform to the military personnel system, and these voices come from across the spectrum of experience and seniority. As political leaders consider changes to the laws that govern this system, it is important to remember our history. If they were made permanent and expanded, the talent management options created by career intermissions could help provide the educated, professional, and adaptive military that successfully faced the challenges of our past.

BJ Armstrong is a naval officer and PhD Candidate with the Department of War Studies, King's College, London.

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